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NEWS RELEASE

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**TENNESSEE ATTORNEY GENERAL JOINS NATIONAL AGREEMENT TO
PROTECT CHILDREN FROM LEAD PAINT POISONING**

Tennessee Attorney General Paul G. Summers today joined attorneys general from 50 other jurisdictions announcing an agreement to warn and educate consumers about the risk of lead paint exposure during repainting and other home renovation work.

The agreement, reached between the state Attorneys General and the National Paint and Coating Association (NPCA), requires member paint manufacturers to affix warning labels on paint cans and provide consumer education and training, alerting consumers to the hazards of lead paint exposure and how to avoid it.

“Our primary concern is to protect Tennesseans, especially our children from lead poisoning,” Attorney General Summers said. “We believe that meaningful warning labels and consumer education will substantially reduce the number of lead poisoning cases associated with some home improvement projects.”

While lead paint has not been manufactured or sold since 1978, it still presents a serious health risk to adults and, especially, young children who are exposed to dust or occupy homes during renovations. Tennessee has no specific cases regarding this issue, however, the Attorney General’s Office wants to insure its consumers have all the information they need to take precautionary measures.

The agreement requires both a lead exposure warning on the side of the paint can, as part of the manufacturer’s surface preparation instructions, as well as other prominent warnings on the paint

cans. The National Paint and Coatings Association has also agreed to fund and provide consumer education and training courses on lead-safe renovation and repainting to homeowners, contractors, landlords and housing workers. Also under the terms of the agreement, NPCA will develop discount programs for safety equipment.

Officials from the State Attorneys General participating in the initiative met in October with representatives from 10 major paint manufacturers to begin negotiations.

Lead poisoning stemming from inadequate surface preparation prior to repainting affects children from all social and economic backgrounds. Whether repainting a rented apartment or installing a brand new kitchen, it is imperative that families take the proper precautions.

Some suggestions include:

- *Keep children and pregnant women out of the work area.
- *Wear protective equipment such as a respirator when sanding and scraping old paint.
- *Clean up carefully with both a shop-type vacuum and a wet mop.

To learn more about working safely with lead paint, consumers should call the Environmental Protection Authority's Lead Information Hotline at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323) or log on to www.epa.gov/lead.

In total, Attorneys General from 50 states and jurisdictions signed on to the agreement, including Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, DC, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virgin Islands, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.